

## SUMMARY

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Interpreters usually endeavour to hit upon something novel. But truth is, of course, truth. It is neither ever new, nor does it ever grow old. Fresh issues that find a place in newspaper columns are but temporal events that emerge one day and disappear on the next. But since truth is immutable and permanent, it is always what it is. If one ventures forth to change or modify it, he has evidently not known truth. So all sages who have trodden the path of seeking and reached the supreme goal cannot but proclaim the same truth. So they do not sow dissension between man and man. One who attempts to do so is evidently ignorant of truth. What Krishn has revealed in the Geeta is the same as sages coming earlier than him had known and which sages to come hereafter shall speak of if they have known it.

SAGES pave and widen the felicitous path by opposing misconceptions and blind customs that but seem like truth and proliferate in its garb. This has been a vital need since the beginning, for many divergent ways come into being with the passage of time. So deceptively like truth do they appear that it is almost impossible to distinguish them from reality and assert that it is so. But since realized sages dwell in the essence, they can recognize ways that are at variance with it. They are capable of representing truth in a definitive form and prompting other men to its pursuit. This is what all seerprophets-Ram, Mahabir, Buddh, Jesus, and Muhammad-have done. And so it was with the more recent Tulsidas, Kabir, and Guru Nanak. Deplorably, however, after a sage has departed from the world, instead of following the path shown by him, his followers gradually begin to revere and worship such physical objects as the places of his birth and death or the spots he had frequented during his life. In other words, they proceed to idolize the great Soul. Their memory of the sage is indeed sharp and strong at the beginning, but it gets blurred with time, and men come increasingly under the sway of misguided and false notions that finally crystallize into stupid, irrational practices.

Many such misguided customs, claiming to represent truth, had flourished in Yogeshwar Krishn's time, too. Being a realized sage who had perceived the highest spiritual reality, he opposed these false creeds and thus fulfilled his given obligation of bringing men back to the path of righteousness. Doesn't he tell Arjun in the sixteenth verse of Chapter 2 that "The unreal has no being and the real has no non-being; and the truth about both has also been seen by men who know the reality?" The unreal has no existence while, on the other hand, the real is never non-existent. Krishn also admits at the same time that he is not saying this as an incarnation of God: he is only saying what has also been affirmed by other sages who realized the truth of the Soul's identity with the all-pervading Supreme Spirit. His account of the human body as a sphere of action (kshetr) and of the one who grows spiritually dexterous by subduing it (kshetragya) is akin to what has also often been professed by other great men of discernment. Elucidating the essence of relinquishment and renunciation in Chapter 18, Krishn singles out one of the four differing creeds prevailing at his time and defends it.

Since truth is one, eternal, and changeless, as a corollary ALL SAGES ARE ONE. Krishn discloses to Arjun in Chapter 4 that it was he who had taught the eternal yog to Vivaswat, the Sun-god. But how are we-like Arjun-to lend credence to this assertion? Vivaswat was born in the distant, obscure past, whereas Krishn has had a recent birth-in a remembered time. Krishn resolves Arjun's doubt by telling him that they have all undergone numerous births. But while men like Arjun, who have not yet completed their journey of quest, are unaware of their previous births, Krishn who has beheld his Self and realized the unmanifest God remembers them well. That is why he is a Yogeshwar! The state he has attained to is therefore ineffable and imperishable. Whenever the spiritual exercise that unites one with God was set in motion, it was initiated by some enlightened saint- be he a Ram or a Zarathustra. The verities that Krishn enunciates in the Geeta have also characterized the teaching of seers like Jesus, Muhammad, and Guru Nanak in later times.

So all sages belong to one fraternity. They all converge at the same point through their perception of the reality of God. The ultimate goal they arrive at is the same. There are many who venture along the path of realization, but the ultimate bliss they attain to is the same if the process of their worship is successfully accomplished. After realization they exist as pure, immaculate Souls, while their bodies are turned into mere dwellings. Whoever belonging to this state has enlightened mankind is a Yogeshwar, a Lord of Yog (union).

Like all others a sage has to be born somewhere. But whether such an individual is born in the East or West, among whatever race or colour, among followers of some existing creed or barbarous tribes, or among the poor or rich, the sage is unshackled by the established traditions of the people among whom he or she is born. A sage rather holds God as his supreme goal, sets upon the way that leads towards him, and ultimately becomes what that Supreme Being is. So there can be no distinctions of caste, class, colour or wealth in the teachings of the realized sage. A sage loses right even of the physical difference of the sexes, male and female. For enlightened persons as it is pointed out in the sixteenth verse of Chapter 15, there are only two kinds of beings in all the world, the mortal and the immortal. Whereas the bodies of all beings are destructible, their Souls are imperishable.

So it is regrettable that disciples of sages, coming in later times, devise their own peculiar, narrow-minded creeds and dogmas. Whereas the followers of one of these sages name themselves Jews, others call themselves Christians or Muslims or Hindus. A sage is quite unconcerned with such denominations and barriers, for such a person is above community and caste. He or she is but a seer-a Soul of enlightenment and realization, and any attempt to mix up with a social setup is an error.

No sage-teacher is, therefore, such an individual to be castigated or spoken ill of, irrespective of among whom they are born or of any sectarian bias by which such a sage is venerated by members of a certain creed. The realized sage is impartial and so by denigrating such a person we but sap the omniscient God who dwells within us, alienate ourselves

from him, and do injury to the Self. An accomplished sage is thus the one earnest benefactor we have in the world. Possessed of knowledge and discernment, the sage alone can bestow the highest good on us. So it is our primary duty to cultivate and cherish goodwill for him or her and we only dupe ourselves if we deprive ourselves of this feeling of friendliness and reverence.

A sore, long-standing problem of India, PROSELYTIZATION conversion from one religious creed to another-has engendered sentiments so irrational and violent that today they are threatening the very existence of the country. That makes it necessary that we approach the problem objectively and with an open mind, so that we can have a clear grasp of its genesis and implications. The questions that need to be answered are: Who is to blame for our mass conversions? In what way have the proselytizers been better or worse than the people they have converted? Since God is one and the truth, dharm is also one and universal, is it really possible for men to change from one faith to another? Do they have a different God by just changing their name and way. of life?

That proselytization has so grievously affected the one country that may rightfully boast of having been the cradle of the eternal truth- the Sanatan Dharm- is a disgrace for which we all have to hang our heads in shame. But this is not enough and we should give careful thought to the circumstances that have brought India to her sorry state of today.

Delusions had grown so rank at the time of Muslim invasions in the Middle Ages that Hindus really came to believe they would lose their dharm if they but ate a handful of rice or drank a mouthful of water from the hands of an alien. Convinced that they had been stripped of their dharm, thousands of Hindus took their own life. They knew well how to die for their dharm, but they had no awareness at all of what that dharm was. There was no consciousness whatsoever of how the eternal, imperishable Soul, unsullied by any material object, could die by a mere touch. Even physical bodies are killed by some weapon or the other, but Hindus were bereft of their dharm by mere touch. However, it was certainly not dharm that was destroyed. What really met with destruction

was just a body of misconceptions. Mugisuddin, the kaji of Bayana, promulgated a law during the reign of Feroze Tughlaq that Muslims had the right to spit into a Hindu's mouth because the Hindu had no faith of his own and he would be redeemed by a Muslim's spittle. Mugisuddin was not really unjust in doing so. If spitting into a mouth could convert only one Hindu to Islam, spitting into wells converted thousands. The teal tyrant of the age thus was not the alien invader, but the Hindu society itself.

Have they who have been converted, we may ask, gained dharm? Conversion from one way of life to another is not dharm. Moreover, the proselytizers, too, were by no means men of dharm. At heart the proselytizers were even worse victims of certain misconceptions. And it was such a pity that ignorant Hindus fell unheeding into the pitfalls of these delusions. In order to reform backward and ignorant tribes, Muhammad had laid down a framework of social order to regulate marriage, divorce, inheritance, borrowing and lending, usury, evidence, oath-taking, atonement, occupation and living, and conduct. He had also forbidden idolatry, adultery and fornication, stealing, intoxicants, gambling, and certain kinds of improper marriages. But instead of being dharm, all these measures were only an attempt at some sort of social organization by which the prophet had endeavoured to divert the lust-ridden society of his time towards his own teachings.

But, while this aspect of Muhammad's teachings has always been given prominence, little thought is given to his concept of dharm. He has laid it down that Allah holds to account the man, even a single breath, of whose is bereft of consciousness of the Almighty, just as he condemns a sinner for his iniquities, and the punishment for which is perpetual damnation. How many of us can sincerely claim that we have lived according to this ideal? Muhammad provided that the man who harms none, not even beasts, is enabled to hear the voice of God. This was said for all places and times. But the Prophet's followers have changed the import of the decree altogether by assigning a unique position to the Grand Mosque at Mecca: it is here that one must not pluck a blade of grass, nor slaughter a beast,

nor cause harm to anyone. Thus Muslims too have been caught in traps of their own making and it is more often than not forgotten that the Grand Mosque is but a monument to cherish and perpetuate the Prophet's sacred memory.

Among others, the true import of Islam was understood by Tabrej, by Mansour, by Iqbal. But they were all victimized and persecuted by religious fanatics and bigots. And so was Socrates poisoned, allegedly for conspiring to convert people to atheism. Since Jesus toiled even on the Sabbath and conferred vision on the blind, the same charge was levelled against him and he was crucified. In India even today, people, who earn their subsistence from a place of worship, a religious order or sect, or from a seat of pilgrimage, raise a great hue and cry that faith is imperilled whenever a sage speaks of reality. They can only oppose truth and do nothing else, because they regard its propagation as a threat to their livelihood. Like the persecutors of Socrates and Jesus, such so called religious people have also either forgotten or deliberately turned a blind eye to why a certain sacred memory had been preserved in a monument in the remote past.

Sages are familiar with all kinds of conduct-external and internal, practical and spiritual, and also of worldly conduct and the ideal conduct enjoined by scriptures, for without such comprehensive knowledge they cannot frame laws to regulate social life and behaviour and a decorous order. Vashisth, Shukrachary, Yogeshwar Krishn himself, Mahatma Buddh, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, Sant Ramdas, Dayanand, and hundreds of other sages like them have done the same. But their social, worldly provisions are at best of a temporal nature. Bestowing material benefits on society is not a question of truth (Sanatan Dharm) because physical problems are here today and gone tomorrow. Though undoubtedly useful in a given time and situation, worldly dispensations by sages are also, therefore, valid only for a limited period and as such they cannot be accepted as a timeless order.

Sages do operate as LAW-GIVERS and they have rightly exerted themselves for the eradication of social evils. The undertaking of worship of the Supreme Spirit in a spirit of

discernment and renunciation may not be possible if these evils are not eliminated. Apart from this, certain "allurements" need to be provided in order to divert men, who are too engrossed in the world, to the state in which they can secure an awareness of truth. But the social order that sages have envisaged to achieve this and the words they have employed to formulate this order do not constitute dharma. They only cater to people's needs for a century or two and are cited as precedents for a few centuries more, but they are certainly rendered lifeless with the emergence of fresh exigencies over the span of a millennium or at most two. The sword was an essential feature of the martial organization laid down by Guru Gobind Singh for the Sikhs. But what is the validity of carrying a sword in the changed circumstances of today? Jesus rode asses and he forbade his disciples to steal asses. But whatever he said of these simple creatures has been rendered irrelevant today because people around the world now rarely use asses as a means of conveyance. In the same way Yogeshwar Krishn attempted to impose a certain order on contemporary society according to the needs of the time, accounts of which are found in such works as the Mahabharat and the Bhagwat. Along with this, however, these works also portray the ultimate reality-the spiritual essence-from time to time. And we shall certainly fail to comprehend both the social aspect and the truth if we mix up the ordinance for the attainment of final liberation with the social provisions. Followers are sadly drawn more by the social, worldly provisions which they hasten to adopt not only as they are but in a much overdone form, and are ever ready to quote sages in defence of the social norms they have accepted. And they do not realize that in doing all this they are in fact only distorting the righteous and true action that realized sages have recommended, and turning it into so many forms of selfdeception. Prejudices-born out of ignorance-have grown and persisted in respect of all holy books, be it the Ved, the Ramayan, the Mahabharat, the Bible, or the Koran.

The primary concern of sages is KSHETR-the sphere of internal action. It is often advanced that there are two spheres of action, external and internal. But this is not true for a sage.

He speaks of only one sphere, although listeners may interpret him differently according to their own individual predilections. It is thus that a single pronouncement is assigned various implications. But the Soul that has attained to Krishn's state by gradually making his way on the path of worship beholds what was perceived by the Lord himself. He alone recognizes the signs provided in the Geeta and know what really the Yogeshwar intended to say.

Not even one verse in the whole song of revelation is concerned with the phenomena of external life. We all know what to eat and how to dress ourselves. Dictated by time, place, and circumstance, variations in mode of living, assumptions, and considerations that regulate social behaviour are a gift from nature. So what provisions could Krishn make for them? If some societies adopt polygamy because their girls outnumber boys, others accept polyandry because there are fewer girls. What laws could Krishn formulate for this? Some underpopulated nations exhort their people to have as many children as they can and reward them for this. In the Vedic Age in India it was prescribed that a couple have at least ten children. But in the changed conditions of today the ideal is one child or, at the most, two. The best thing, of course, is to have no child at all. The less children, the fewer the problems of the country will be in this age of overpopulation crisis. Now, what rules could Krishn lay down for this?

It is not that the Geeta is quite unconcerned with MATERIAL LIFE AND PROSPERITY. Krishn promises in verses 20-22 of Chapter 9 : "Men who do the pious deeds enjoined by the three Ved, who have tasted nectar and freed themselves from sin, and who wish for heavenly existence through worshipping me by yagya, go to heaven and enjoy godly pleasures for their virtuous acts." It is said that God grants what the worshippers desire. After enjoying the joys of heaven, however, they have to return to the mortal world-the world that is governed by the three properties. But since they abide in God, the ultimate bliss, and are protected by him, they are never destroyed. It is also God who gradually liberates them by fulfilling their yearning for enjoyment and thus setting them on to the way that leads to the highest good.



But material prosperity is only an incidental concern of the Geeta and it is in this respect that it is different from THE VED. There are numerous allusions to them in the Geeta, but the sacred books of the Ved are altogether only milestones. The seeker has no use for them after he has reached his destination. So Arjun is prompted, in the forty-fifth verse of Chapter 2, that since all the books of the Ved provide illumination only within the limits of the three properties of nature, he should rise above them, liberate himself from the incongruities of joy and grief, rest on that which is constant, and be equally indifferent towards the acquisition of what he does not have and the protection of what he has, so as to devote himself intently to the Self within. In the very next verse it is added that the worshipper has no need for the Ved after final liberation just as a man has no need for a measly pond when there is the infinite ocean all around him. There is also the suggestion here that the one who goes beyond the Ved, by knowing God, is a Brahmin. So, although the usefulness of the Ved does come to an end for worshippers of the Brahmin class, there is no doubt about their utility for others. Krishn proclaims in the twentyeighth verse of Chapter 8 that after having secured knowledge of the essence of God, the yogi goes beyond the rewards of Vedic scriptural study, sacrificial rites, penance, and charity, and thus attains to absolution. That also means that the Vedic scriptures endure and that performance of the ordained yagya is incomplete so long as the ultimate state has not been achieved. As it is pointed out in Chapter 15, he who knows God, the root of the Ashwath tree that the world is, is a knower of the Ved. That knowledge, however, can be had only by sitting devotedly at the feet of a noble sage-teacher. Rather than a book or seat of learning, the mode of worship that this mentor enjoins is the source-the spring-of that knowledge, although it cannot be denied that holy books and centres of formal instruction are intended to steer one in the same direction.

According to the Geeta there is only ONE GOD. The whole pantheon of lesser gods and goddesses worshipped by Hindus is a stark reminder of how the spirit of dharm gets ignored and the

letter predominates, giving rise to countless perversions. Since the ordained task is an internal process of the mind and senses, how fitting is it to build external places of worship such as temples and mosques, and to adore idols of symbolic representations of gods and goddesses? Ideally Hindus are followers of the eternal truths of Sanatan Dharm- values and virtues that awaken the immutable, eternal God within man's heart and thus enable him to realize his Self. Pursuing and delving deep into eternal truths, their forebears had disseminated their insights and revelations all over the world. Irrespective of the part of the earth he hails from, one who treads the path of reality is essentially a believer in the eternal truth, Sanatan Dharm. Overridden by desire, however, Hindus have gradually lost sight of reality and become victims of a host of misconceptions. Krishn emphatically warns Arjun that there are no entities like gods. Whatever be the power a man devotes himself to, it is God who stands behind the object of his adoration to reward him. It is God who sustains all worship, for he is all-pervading. Truly, therefore, the worship of other gods is unlawful and its fruits are perishable. Only those ignorant men whose minds have been held to ransom by desire worship other gods and their objects of worship vary according to their native inclinations. While gods are the object of adoration by good and virtuous men, demons and yaksh are worshipped by those who are given to passion and moral blindness, ghosts and spirits are venerated by men of ignorance. Many of these worshippers even subject themselves to severe and grievous austerities. But, as Krishn enlightens Arjun, all such worshippers of improper objects impair not only their physical beings but also God who dwells within them. Such worshippers should, therefore, be deemed as surely possessed of an unrighteous, evil disposition. Since God abides in the hearts of all beings, it is binding on everyone that he takes refuge in him alone. The true place of worship is, therefore, not external but within the realm of heart. Yet people are drawn towards and worship even such unworthy objects as rock, water, mere structures of brick and mortar, and a host of inferior divinities. To these objects they also sometimes add an idol of Krishn.

What an irony that even followers of Buddhism, who lay such great stress on Krishn's teachings, have sculpted images of their mentor Buddh who had all his life condemned idolatry. They have forgotten the words spoken by their noble teacher to his beloved pupil Anand: "Waste not your time on the worship of one who is in the state of being."

This is not to insist, however, that places and objects of divine adoration like temples, mosques, churches, seats of pilgrimage, idols, and monuments have no value whatsoever. Most significantly they keep alive memories of bygone seers so that people may constantly remember their ideals and achievements. Among these sages there have been women as well as men. Sita, Janak's daughter, had been a Brahmin girl in her previous life. At her father's prompting, she had subjected herself to rigorous penance, but success had yet eluded her. In her next life, however, she was rewarded when she achieved union with Ram and came to be revered as immaculate (like God himself) and immortal, and as maya-God's "divine consort". Meera had a royal birth, but there was an awakening of devotion to God in her heart, too. Struggling with many hurdles she at last emerged triumphant. Shrines and monuments have been erected to commemorate her, so that the community may imbibe spiritual life from her pious example. Be it Meera or Sita, or any other visionary who has sought for and perceived reality, each of them is an ideal for us and we should follow in their footsteps. But what greater folly can be there than assuming that we have discharged our moral obligation by merely offering flowers and applying sandal paste to these exemplars?

If we but look at some relic of one whom we regard as an ideal, we are overwhelmed by the sentiment of loving devotion. This is as it should be, for it is only by the inspiration provided by him and by his guidance that we can move ahead on our spiritual journey. It should be our purpose to advance step by step towards the point where we become what our ideal is. This is true worship. However, although it is right that we do not in any way slight our ideals, we shall be guilty of straying from our goal and be wide off

our mark if we complacently believe that offering of leaves and flowers is all that is needed for achievement of the propitious end.

As for gaining wisdom from our ideals and acting upon it, whatever we call them-a hermitage, monastery, temple, mosque, church, math, vihar or gurudwara, each one of them does have its merit provided it is marked by genuine spiritual concern. Whose memory or image is consecrated in these monuments? What was his accomplishment? What penances did he go through for it? How did he make his attainment? It is to learn the answers to these questions that we should go to centres of worship and pilgrimage. But these centres are profitless if they cannot enlighten us by example on the steps by which some accomplished Soul had finally reached his goal. They are also of no value if they cannot present us with a setup that is truly propitious. In that case all they can offer us is some blind, established creed or practice. If it is so, we doubtlessly cause ourselves harm by frequenting them. These centres of worship had originally come up to obviate the arduous necessity of individuals going from one home to another for instruction and preaching, and to replace it with collective religious discourse. But in the course of time idolatory and irrational adherence to entrenched conventions supplanted dharm and gave rise to innumerable misguided notions.

The syllable OM is to Hindus the symbol of the one God that the Geeta illuminates. OM, also called pranav-the word or sound, expresses the Supreme Being. In the Vedic literature it is said that the past, present, and future are all nothing but OM.' The syllable represents the omnipresent, omnipotent, changeless God. From OM are born all that is propitious, all faiths, all celestial beings, all the Ved, all yagya, all utterances, all rewards, and all that is inanimate or animate. Krishn tells Arjun in the eighth verse of Chapter 8: "I am ... the sacred syllable OM." In the following chapter it is said: "He who departs from the body intoning OM, God in word, and remembering me, attains to salvation." (Verse 13). And he, too, Krishn affirms in the seventeenth verse of Chapter 9, is "the bearer and preserver of the whole world as also the giver of rewards for

action; father, mother, and also the grandsire; the sacred, imperishable OM who is worthy of being known; and all Ved- Rig, Sam, and Yajur." In Chapter 10 he calls himself "OM among words" and "the vowel akar among the letters of the alphabet" the first sound of the sacred OM. (verses 25 and 33). The twentythird verse of Chapter 17 declares that "OM, tat, and sat are three epithets used for the Supreme Being from whom at the outset there came forth Brahmin, the Ved, and yagya." And in the very next verse it is added: "It is hence that the deeds of yagya, charity, and of penance, as ordained by scripture, are always initiated by the devotees of Ved with a resonant utterance of the syllable OM." Krishn's final verdict is that recitation of OM is a prime necessity and that its proper mode has to be learnt by sitting devotedly at the feet of some accomplished sage.

Krishn is an incarnation, but he is also a sage-a noble teacher-preceptor-who is the GIVER OF YOG. As we have just seen, according to the Yogeshwar, the knowledge of the way that leads to ultimate good, the means of embarking on it, and of its attainment, is derived from a noble mentor. Even roaming about from one holy place to another or similar other strenuous exertions cannot bring this knowledge within our reach in the absence of a teacher who can impart it to us. In the thirtyfourth verse of Chapter 4, Arjun is advised to obtain this knowledge from sages through reverence, inquiry and guileless solicitation, for only these wise Souls who are aware of the reality can initiate him into it. Close proximity to an accomplished sage, asking him sincere questions, and rendering of humble service to him constitute the means of realization. Only by pursuing this course can Arjun finally bring his spiritual quest to fruition. The vital importance of an accomplished teacherpreceptor is again emphatically stated in Chapter 18: "Whereas the way of securing knowledge, the worthwhile knowledge, and the knower constitute the threefold inspiration to action, the doer, the agents, and the deed itself are the threefold constituents of action." According to Krishn's injunction, therefore, an enlightened sage, rather than books, is the primary medium by which action is accomplished. A book only offers a formula and no illness is healed

by memorizing the prescription: the more important thing is its application-its practice.

Much has been said about delusions and we are confronted by them, too, in regard to ACTION. The Geeta sheds light on how these misconceptions come into being. Krishn tells Arjun in the thirty-ninth verse of Chapter 2 that both the Way of Knowledge and Discernment and the Way of Selfless Action can effectively sever the fetters of action as well as of its consequence. Practising them in even small measures successfully liberates one from the terror of birth and death. In both the ways the resolute deed is one, the mind is one, and the direction is also one. But ignorant minds are riddled with endless contradictions. In the guise of accomplishing action they invent numerous deeds, rites, and ceremonies. But these are not true action and Arjun is exhorted to undertake only the action that is ordained. This action is an appointed course and it is that which brings to an end the body which has been journeying through one birth to another since time immemorial. This journey can by no means be said to have terminated if the Soul has to undergo yet another birth.

The appointed action is only one, the action that we call worship or meditation. But there are two ways of approaching it : the WAY OF KNOWLEDGE and the WAY OF SELFLESS ACTION. Engaging in the deed with a proper evaluation of one's ability, as well as of the profit and loss involved in the enterprise, is the Way of Knowledge. The one who traverses this path is conscious of what he is today, what change there is going to be in his role on the next day, and that he will ultimately reach the aspired-for goal. Since he proceeds with a due awareness and understanding of his situation, this wayfarer is called a rover over the Way of Knowledge. But the man who steps on the Way of Selfless Action commences his undertaking with a total reliance on the adored teacher. This seeker leaves the questions of profit and loss to his mentor's discretion. So this is also the Way of Devotion. What is worth noting, however, is that the initial impulse in both cases comes from a noble teacher. Enlightened by the same sage, while one of the pupils embarks on the prescribed task with self-reliance, the other does it by surrendering himself to

the mercy of his teacher. So it is that Yogeshwar Krishn tells Arjun that the ultimate essence that is secured by the Way of Knowledge is also achieved by the Way of Selfless Action. The seeker who perceives the two as identical is the one who knows reality. The seer who declares both actions as one is Krishn and the action, too, in both cases is one. Treaders on both paths have to relinquish desire and the outcome of the two disciplines is also one. Only the attitudes with which this action is undertaken are two.

This one action-the ordained action-is YAGYA. Krishn has explicitly told Arjun in the ninth verse of Chapter 3: "Since the conduct of yagya is the only action and all other business in which people are engaged are only forms of worldly bondage, O son of Kunti, be unattached and do your duty to God well." True action is that which frees the Self from shackles of the world. But what precisely is this deed, the undertaking of yagya, which effects the accomplishment of action? In Chapter 4, Krishn has elucidated yagya in more than a dozen ways which are collectively but a portrayal of the mode that provides access to the Supreme Being. In fact, all the different forms of yagya are internal processes of contemplation: forms of worship that render God manifest and known. Yagya is thus the special, ordained means by which a worshipper traverses the path that leads to God. The means by which this appointed task is accomplished-regulation and serenity of breath, meditation, reflection, and restraint of the senses-constitute action. Krishn has also made it clear that yagya has nothing to do with nonspiritual matters and that the yagya which is performed by means of material objects is indeed contemptible. It is so even if we offer sacrifices worth millions. True yagya is performed by internal operations of the mind and senses. Knowledge is the consciousness of the immortal essence that ensues from yagya at its successful completion. Yogi who are blessed with this transcendental awareness become one with God. And once the goal that had to be achieved is reached, there is no need for any further action by the liberated Soul, for all action merges into the knowledge that is gained from direct perception of the ultimate essence. The liberation of the Soul is thus also liberation from action.

The Geeta speaks of no action other than this appointed action-

the yagya that achieves God-realization. This has been repeatedly emphasized by Krishn. It is yagya which he has named the "ordained task"-the deed that is worth doing-in the opening verse of Chapter 6. It is further pointed out in Chapter 16 that the undertaking of yagya commences in the real sense only after lust, anger and greed have been completely forsaken (verse 21). The more a man is absorbed in worldly business, the more tempting do desire, anger, and greed appear to him. In Chapters 17 and 18, too, while dwelling upon the task that is appointed, worthy and righteous, Krishn has affirmed over and over that this one ordained action is the most propitious.

Unfortunately, however, in spite of Krishn's repeated warning we persist in assuming that whatever we do in the world is "action." And that there is no need for any relinquishment. All that is needed for our deeds to be selfless is that we should not aspire after fruits of labour. We erroneously persuade ourselves that the Way of Action is accomplished by just our undertaking a task with a sense of obligation, or that the Way of Renunciation is achieved by a mere surrender of whatever we do to God. Similarly, no sooner is the question of yagya broached than we fabricate the five "great sacrifices" such as offering oblations to all beings (bhoot yagya) or water libations to departed ancestors, or sacrifices to fire to appease superior gods like Vishnu, and promptly rush to perform them loudly chanting "swaha." Had Krishna not made a specific pronouncement in regard to yagya, we should have been at liberty to follow the dictates of our will. But it is a demand of wisdom that we obey what is laid down in scripture. Yet we obstinately refuse to act upon Krishn's precepts because of the sinful legacy of numerous misguided customs and creeds as well as modes of worship that we have inherited and which bind our minds in chains of ignorance. We can run away from material possessions, but the preconceptions that lurk in our minds and hearts pursue us wherever we go. And if we ever deign to abide by Krishn's teachings, we cannot help distorting them into the shape of our deluded, pre-conceived notions. It is evident that yagya necessarily entails RENUNCIATION. So, naturally we have the question if there is any stage before the ultimate realization at which one may forsake this action in the name of renunciation. It appears from the nature of Krishn's



argument on the question that at his time, too, there existed a sect, the members of which boasted of being renunciates because they did not kindle fire and had even given up meditation. As against this, Krishn has asserted that there is no provision for abandonment of the ordained action on either the Way of Knowledge or the Way of Devotion. The enjoined task has to be set upon. This is an inescapable necessity. By constant and resolute practice the act of worship is progressively refined and finally rendered so subtle that will and desire are completely subdued and stilled. True renunciation is only this total cessation of will and desire, and there is no sacrifice earlier than this accomplishment that could be called renunciation. In chapter after chapter (2, 3, 5, 6), and specially in the final chapter, it is underlined that no man becomes a yogi-a selfdenier-by just not lighting fire or by relinquishment of action.

If we but understand the nature of yagya and action, we will also easily comprehend the other issues raised in the Geeta, the issues of WAR, of the four part organization of action, of varnsankar, and of the Way of Knowledge as well as the Yog' of Action. That means the entire message of the Geeta. Arjun did not wish to fight. He cast away his bow and sat down despondently in the rear of his chariot. By imparting the knowledge of action to him, then, Krishn not only convinced him of its validity but also induced him to take up his appointed task. Since Arjun is exhorted to take up arms and fight in almost a score of verses, doubtlessly there was a war. But there is not a single verse in the whole of the Geeta which approves of physical slaughter and bloodshed. This is clearly seen from Chapters 2, 3, 11, 15, and 18, because the action that is stipulated in all of them without exception is the deed that is ordained and performed through solitary meditation, and in which the mind is reined in from all objects other than the cherished goal. If such is the nature of action envisioned in the Geeta, the question of physical warfare simply does not arise. If the propitious way revealed by the Geeta is only for those who wish to fight wars, we had better keep it aside. In fact, Arjun's predicament is' one that confronts all of us. His grief and indecision were there in the historical past and they are with us even today. When we try to restrain our minds and concentrate with all our being, we are shaken by such infirmities as desire, anger, infatuation, and disenchantment. To fight these

maladies and destroy them is war. Wars have been and are being fought in the world, but the peace resulting from them is incidental and transitory. True and lasting peace is won only when the Self has attained the state of immortality.

This is the only peace after which there is no disquiet, and it can be achieved only by accomplishing the ordained action. It is this action, rather than mankind, that Yogeshwar Krishn has divided into four VARN or classes. A worshipper with inadequate knowledge is at the Shudra stage. So it is incumbent on him to begin his quest with rendering of service as required by his native ability, for thus alone can the proficiencies of the Vaishya, Kshatriya, and Brahmin classes be gradually inculcated in him. Thus only will he be enabled to ascend step by step. At the other end, the Brahmin too is flawed because he is yet distant from God. And, after he has merged with that Supreme Being, he ceases to be a Brahmin. "Varn" denotes "form." A man's form is not his body but his inborn disposition. Krishn tells Arjun in the third verse of Chapter 17 : "Since the faith of all men, O Bharat, is according to their inherent propensity and man is essentially reverent, he is what his faith is: ' Every man's character is moulded by his faith and the faith is according to his dominant property. Varn is thus a scale, a yardstick, to measure one's capacity for action. But with the passing of time we either grew oblivious of or discarded the appointed action, began to decide social status by heredity-thus treating varn as caste, and laid down rigid occupations and modes of living for different men. This is social classification, whereas the classification made in the Geeta is spiritual. Moreover, they who have thus twisted the meaning of varn have also distorted the implications of action so as to protect their hollow social standing and economic privileges. With the passage of time, thus, varn came to be determined by birth alone. But the Geeta makes no such provision. Krishn says that he was the creator of the fourfold varn. Are we to assume from this that there was creation within the boundaries of India alone, for castes such as ours cannot be found anywhere else in the world? The number of our castes and subcastes is beyond counting. Does this mean that Krishn had divided men into classes? The definitive answer to this is found in the thirteenth verse of Chapter 4, where,

he declares: "I have created the four classes (varn) according to innate properties and action." So he has classified action, not men, on the basis of inherent properties. The meaning of varn will be understood without difficulty if we have grasped the significance of action, and the import of varnsankar will be clear if we have comprehended what varn is.

One who deviates from the way of ordained action is VARNSANKAR. The true varn of the Self is God himself. So to stray from the path that takes the Self to God and to be lost in the wilderness of nature is to be varnsankar. Krishn has revealed that no one can attain to that Supreme Spirit without setting upon the way of action. Sages of accomplishment who are emancipated neither gain from undertaking action nor lose by forsaking it. And yet they engage in action for the good of mankind. Like these sages, there is nothing that Krishn has not achieved, but he yet continues to labour diligently for the sake of men who lag behind. If he does not perform his given task well and earnestly, the world will perish and all men will be varnsankar ( 3:22-24). Illegitimate children are said to be born when women turn adulterous, but Krishn affirms that all mankind is under the threat of falling into the varnsankar state if the sages who dwell in God refrain from fulfilling their obligation. If these sages desist from the performance of their assigned task, the unaccomplished will imitate them, discontinue worship, and for ever wander in the maze of nature. They will thus become varnsankar, for the immaculate God and the state of actionlessness can be achieved only by an undertaking of the ordained action.

Along with his fear of destruction of families in the impending war and the consequent birth of varnsankar (illegitimate) children, Arjun also gives vent to his apprehension that, deprived of OBSEQUIAL OFFERINGS, the departed Souls of ancestors will fall from heaven. Thereupon Yogeshwar Krishn asks him how such a delusion has come over him. Pronouncing that obsequial offerings are but an instance of spiritual ignorance, the Lord points out that the Soul changes from a tattered, ravaged body to a new one just as a man discards worn out clothes to put on a new apparel. Since

the physical body is mere clothing and, rather than dying, the Soul just changes from one apparel to another, who is it that we endeavour to appease and sustain by making all these obsequial offerings? That explains why Krishn declares the practice an example of ignorance. Stressing the same again, he adds in the seventh verse of Chapter 15 : "The immortal Soul in the body is a part of mine and it is he who draws the five senses and the sixth-the mind-that dwell in nature:' The Soul carries along the properties and mode of the mind and five senses of the body from which he departs and takes them into his new body. When the next body, equipped with all the means of physical enjoyment, is immediately assured to the Soul, to whom do we offer the obsequial flour-cakes and libations?

As the Soul discards his old body, he at once assumes another, and there is no interruption between the two events. Imagining, therefore, that the Souls of our deceased ancestors of a thousand or more generations are lying somewhere waiting to be fed and offered drinks by their living descendants, as well as shedding tears of sorrow over the fancied fall of these Souls from their non-existent heavenly abode, cannot but be an instance of ignorance.

Arjun's anxieties over varnsankar and the fall of the Souls of the departed forbearers from their celestial home naturally draws one's attention to the questions of SIN and PIETY. Numerous misconceptions also prevail in regard to what is virtuous and what is impious: the righteous and the unrighteous. According to Yogeshwar Krishn, the man who is afflicted with the maladies of lust and anger that arise from the property of spiritual ignorance, and whose hunger for carnal enjoyment is insatiable, is the most abject sinner. In other words, covetousness is the chief among all sins. Lust and desire, dwelling in the senses, mind and intellect, are the fountainhead of sin. No amount of washing the body can make us clean if iniquity lurks within the mind.

Declaring that the mind and senses are purged by constant remembrance and recitation of the name, by steady meditation, and by resigning oneself as well as rendering ,earnest service to some realized, accomplished sage who has grasped the essence, Krishn urges Arjun, in the thirty-fourth verse of Chapter 4, to undertake these deeds. Arjun is exhorted to obtain the knowledge,

into which all action is at last merged, from sages through reverence, inquiry, and innocent solicitation. This knowledge-awareness of the highest spiritual truth-annihilates all sin.

The same idea is stated differently in Chapter 13 when Arjun is told that whereas wise men who partake of the food ensuing from yagya are liberated from all sin, the impious who only covet gratification of physical desires subsist on nothing but sin. Yagya is, as we have seen, a certain process of meditation by which all influences and impressions of the world-animate as well as inanimate-stored in the mind are reduced to nothing. God is the only remnant that is left behind. So, while sin is that which engenders bodies, acts of piety enable a man to realize the indestructible, eternal essence after which the Soul is freed from the compulsion of assuming yet another body.

Rid of wicked and conflicting passions, the doers of virtuous action which brings the cycle of birth and death to an end worship and adore the Supreme Spirit with an avowed resolve. Krishn tells Arjun in the twentyninth verse of Chapter 7 : "They who are aware of God, the identity of the Supreme Spirit and the individual Soul, and of all action, find shelter under me and strive for liberation from the cycle of birth and death:' They who know Krishn as well as they know the Supreme Being who animates all beings, all divinities, and yagya, and whose minds are absorbed in him, come to know the God in Krishn and are united with him forever. Piety is, therefore, that which induces the Self to rise above birth and death and all evils so as to know the eternal, immutable reality and forever dwell in it. By the same logic, that deed is sinful which constrains the Self to go round and round within the boundaries of mortality, and of grief and spiritual sickness.

It is said again in Chapter 10 that the wise man, who knows Krishn's essence as the birthless, eternal, and Supreme God of the entire world, is freed from all sins. It is only the direct perception of God, as we have been enlightened, that liberates the Soul from sin.

In brief, therefore, whereas that which effects repeated birth

and death is sin, the deed that prompts one towards God and begets the ultimate repose is piety. While merits such as truthfulness, relying upon the produce of one's own labour, regarding women with the loving reverence that is felt for one's own mother, and integrity are also important concomitants of virtue, true piety is of course the realization of God. The man who offends against faith in God is a sinner.

In the popular imagination sin and HELL always go together. Now, what is this hell? It has been described variously as bottomless pit, as inferno, and as underworld. Giving an account of the property of ignorance, Krishn has pointed out in Chapter 16 that, misguided in numerous ways, enmeshed in the webs of attachment, and inordinately fond of sensual pleasure, men fall into the most defiled hell. Light is shed on the nature of this hell in the nineteenth verse of the same chapter when Krishn says: "I for ever condemn these abhorring, sinful, and cruel men, the most abject among mankind, to inferior births." ignorant and wicked men who entertain a feeling of hostility against God are perpetually condemned to repeated birth in lower forms of life. As for what takes one to this hell, it is declared in the same chapter that lust, anger, and greed, all destructive of sanctity of the Self, are the three gateways to hell. It is these maladies, more than any others, that constitute the devilish hoard. So hell, as visualized in the Geeta, is degradation to recurrent birth in base forms.

After having viewed all the different, scattered strands that go into the making of the Geeta, it will be now opportune to dwell upon the composite view of DHARM that emerges from the scripture. It may be claimed without any impropriety that dharm, properties and conduct that enable a man to realize his Self, is the overriding concern of the Geeta. According to Krishn (2.16-29), the unreal never exists and the real is never without existence at any time. God alone is real, permanent, indestructible, changeless, and eternal, but he is beyond thought, imperceptible, and quite above the fluttering of mind. Action is the name of the mode by which a man attains to God after subduing his mind. Putting this mode into practice is dharm, which is a trust or obligation. As Krishn has told

Arjun in the fortieth verse of Chapter 2 : "Since selfless action neither wears out the seed from which it sprang nor has any adverse consequence, even a partial observance of it liberates one from the dire terror of repeated birth and death." So the undertaking of this action is dharm.

This appointed action has been classified into four categories on the basis of the seekers' inherent ability. At the initial stage, when a man sets upon the way of seeking after a due understanding of his task, he is a Shudr. But he is elevated to the rank of a Vaishya when his hold upon the means gets steadier. At the third stage, the same worshipper is promoted to the yet higher status of a Kshatriya when he gains the ability to oppose the conflicts of nature. The awakening of true knowledge that is transmitted by the voice of God himself, and which bestows on one, the ability to rely upon that God and become like him, transmutes the seeker into a Brahmin.

Hence it is that Yageshwar Krishn lays down in the fortysixth verse of Chapter 18 that engaging in action that is in harmony with one's native disposition is swadharm. Though of an inferior merit, the discharge of one's natural obligation should be preferred. The undertaking of a deed of superior merit is, on the other hand, improper and injurious if it is attempted without cultivating the ability that is commensurate with it. Even losing one's life in the fulfillment of one's inborn calling is better, because the body is a mere garb and no one is really changed by putting on a different apparel. When taken up again, the spiritual exercise is resumed from the same point at which it was discontinued. Thus climbing from step to step, the seeker at last attains to the immortal state.

The same is re-emphasized in the forty-seventh verse of the concluding chapter, when it is said that a man attains to ultimate liberation by worshipping God well according to his inborn inclination. In other words, remembering and meditating on God by the appointed mode is dharm.

But who is the man entitled to this spiritual discipline called dharm? Who has the privilege of approaching it? Shedding light on

the problem, Krishn tells Arjun that even the most degraded man is rendered virtuous if he worships him (Krishn)- the one God-with intentness, and his Soul is then merged with God who is the ultimate reality and dharm. So, according to the Geeta, that man is pious who performs the appointed task in keeping with his innate property to realize God.

Arjun is counselled at last to forsake all his other obligations and seek refuge in Krishn. So that man who is wholly devoted to the one God is endowed with piety. To dedicate oneself thus to God is dharm. The process by which the Self is enabled to attain to the Supreme Being is dharm. The awareness, that comes to sages after their hunger for union with God has been quenched because of their achievement of the ultimate state, is the only reality in all of creation. So we have to seek refuge in these men of enlightenment and wisdom in order to learn how we can make our way along the path that leads to final bliss. That path is only one and embarking on it is dharm.

Dharm is an obligation-a sacred trust. It is propitious and the mind that applies itself to this enjoined task is also one and unified. (2.41) Offering the functions of the senses and the operations of the life-winds to the fire of yog-self-restraint-kindled by the knowledge of God is dharm. (4.27) When self-control is identical with the Soul, and the operations of breath and the senses are thoroughly stilled, the current which arouses passions and the current that bears one towards God merge into one in the Self. Realization of God is the sublime culmination of this spiritual process.

The FELICITY offered by the Geeta is its illumination of the hidden truth of God-for the enlightenment of all mankind. There are no schools that impart instruction in lust, anger, greed, and delusion to their pupils. And yet there are youngsters who are better-versed in these vices than even their elders. What can Krishn teach us in regard to this? There was a time when pupils were initiated into the Ved and trained in the martial skills of archery and wielding maces. But no one cares to learn these things today because ours is an age of automatic machines and self-propelled weapons. What can Krishn say about these matters? What provisions for the external,



physical life can he possibly make? In the olden days, yagya was performed to invoke rains, but today we do it by mechanical means. In the past crops were almost wholly dependent on rains, but now there is artificial irrigation and we have the much vaunted "Green Revolution." What can the Yogeshwar say about all this? That is why he has frankly admitted that bound and constrained by the properties of nature, the physical life of man grows and changes according to circumstance. It is these properties that shape the different forms of external life. Knowledge of the physical world has grown tremendously and bifurcated into numerous branches. But there is a reality that transcends all this physical knowledge. It is always there with every one of us, but unfortunately we are oblivious of it. We neither know it nor can recognize it. It is the memory, the awareness, of this sublime reality that slips from Arjun's mind, but he recovers it by listening devoutly to Krishn's sacred message that is enshrined in the Geeta. The memory that comes back to Arjun is the memory of God who dwells in the realm of every heart and is yet so far away. It is every man's aspiration to approach that Supreme Essence, but he does not know the way. How unfortunate it is that we know all other ways but are ignorant of this one, unique way that takes us to ultimate happiness? The shroud of nescience of not knowing, that envelops us is so thick that the mind fails to penetrate it and get at the truth. Conscious of the ignorance that lies like a dense mantle over men's minds, the Yogeshwar, knower of man's innermost secrets, has in his infinite grace illumined the hidden truth in the Geeta for the enlightenment of all of us. As for the language in which his teachings are enshrined, it is so simple, direct, and lucid that no reader can either misconstrue it or experience any difficulty in comprehending it. The way that Krishn has revealed for the attainment of the ultimate essence is the Geeta's most precious and indeed inestimable gift for the good of all humanity. The Geeta embodies a spiritual precept that is complete in every respect. This precept is found in the Ved, too, and they are among the sublimest of holy books. The Upanishad are their abstract. And the Geeta, "Song of the Lord," embodies the essence of all of them.

Since a sequestered life, restraint of the senses, and constant reflection and meditation are essential requirements of the ordained action, it is often asked of what use the Geeta can be to HOUSEHOLDERS. That is like saying that the Geeta is only for ascetics-for men who have renounced the world and all. But this is not true. Although the Geeta is primarily for persons who tread the path of spiritual quest, it is also in good measure for those who aspire to step on to it. This song of revelation is for all men, and it is specially salutary for householders-for men and women who are rearing a family and struggling to support and sustain it, because such individuals stand at the point where action is commenced.

Krishn tells Arjun that the initial step taken in the undertaking of selfless action is never destroyed. Attempted in even a small measure, it at last provides liberation from the terror' of birth and death. Now, who besides an overburdened and harried householder is expected to act in a small measure? He has so little time to devote to the task. Arjun is told in the thirtysixth verse of Chapter 4 : "Even if you are the most heinous sinner, the ark of knowledge will carry you safely across all evils." (4.36) Now, who possibly is expected to be the greater sinner, the man who is incessantly absorbed in spiritual seeking or the man who only contemplates embarking on it? So the garhastya-order-the order of the householder-is the stage that marks the beginning of action. In Chapter 6, Arjun asks the lord: "What is the end, O Krishn, of the feeble worshipper whose inconstant mind has strayed away from selfless action and who has, therefore, been deprived of perception which is the final outcome of yog?" Is it that this deluded, shelterless man is dissipated like scattered clouds, deprived of both God-realization and worldly pleasures? Krishn then proceeds to assure his friend and disciple that even this irresolute man who digresses from yog is not destroyed, *for* one who has performed good deeds never comes to grief. With his sanskar, such a person is either born in the house of a noble man or admitted to the family of an enlightened yogi. Such a person is thus on both ways induced to worship and, treading this appointed path through several births, he or she finally achieves the ultimate state. All this is relevant to a householder more than to anyone else. Isn't a person in *fact*, re-born as a householder because of wandering from the Way of

Selfless Action? And this accident of birth is what bestows on that individual an inclination towards spiritual seeking and worship. In this context Krishn further declares in the thirtieth verse of Chapter 9 : "Even if a man of the most depraved conduct worships incessantly, he is worthy of being regarded as a saint because he is a man of true resolve." Who can be more fallen, the man who is already absorbed in divine adoration or the man who has not yet been initiated into the process? Even women, Vaishya, and Shudr, who are said by the ignorant to be of inferior birth, Krishn promises in the thirty-second verse of the same chapter, attain to the Supreme goal by taking refuge in God. What is pledged here is thus for all mankind-Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and all others, men and women. Even persons of sinful conduct can achieve final emancipation by finding shelter under God. A householder is not essentially a sinful man. Moreover, the order to which he belongs is, as we have already seen, the starting point of the scripturally ordained action. Climbing ever higher, although step by step, the householder will also achieve the state of a yogi and become a part of the supreme essence and, then, his form will be, as Yogeshwar Krishn says, like the form of God himself.

**Knowledge derived from Geeta is the pure Manusmriti –** Geeta appeared even before the original man Manu – **‘Imam vivaswateh yogam proktavanahamvyayam’** (4.10) Arjun! I told about this indestructible happening to Sun at the beginning of time and Sun told it to Manu. Manu listened to it and carried it in his memory because what he heard could be carried only in Manu’s smiriti (memory). Manu told the same thing to King Ikshwaku. The Rajarshis from Ikshwaku knew it and during this important period this indestructible happening disappeared from this earth. Initially there was a tradition of listening and memorizing. It was not even thought that it could be documented. Manu Maharaj carried it in his psychological memory and created the tradition of memory. Thus this knowledge derived from Geeta is the pure Manusmriti.

The Lord had imparted this knowledge to the Sun even before he gave it to Manu, so why don’t we call it Suryasmriti? In fact the Sun is that part of the Light, the Almighty that is the creator of this universe. Lord Shri Krishna says, ‘I ma the father of the ultimate life stream sperm, and the nature is the womb that nurtures it’. The

Sun is the originator. Sun is that ultimate power of the Lord that designed the humans. It is not a personality and where the enlightened power created the humans the same power was transferred the knowledge based on Geeta that is it was transferred to the Sun. Sun told the same to his son Manu thus it is called Manusmriti. Sun is not a person, it is the source.

Lord Shri Krishna says – ‘I am going to say that same ancient Yoga for you now. You are my beloved disciple, true friend. Arjun was intelligent, true worthy. He reeled out a chain of questions like you were born just; the Sun was born ages ago. How do I accept that ‘You told this to the Sun’? He asked some twenty twenty-five questions of this type. By the time Geeta came to conclusion all his questions were answered, at that juncture the Lord Himself raised the questions Arjun could not muster up and were in his benefit and clarified the same. At the end of it all the Lord said, ‘Arjun! Did you listen to my advice in concentration? Was your ignorance raised out of desire has vanished? Arjun said,

**Nashto moha smritirlabdha twatprasadanmayachyut I**

**Sthitohsmi gatasandehah karishye vachanam tava II 18/73**

Hey Lord, my desires have subsided. I have gotten memory. I have not only listened but I am carrying it as part of system now. I will abide by your orders, and will hold the war. He picked up his bow, warred, won, and established an empire of the pure dharma and in the form of a religious scripture that original Dharmashastra Geeta again came in circulation.

Geeta is source religious scripture. This is the Manusmriti that was embedded in memory by Arjuna. There is a reference to two Geeta in front of Manu – One gotten from the Father, the second, the Vedas which appeared in front of Manu. There was no third thing that appeared Manu's time. Those days documentation was not a way, paper & pen were not common thus there was the tradition of listening to the knowledge and making it part of the memory. Manu Maharaj, the source of human kind, the first human gave the honor of shruti (listening) to Vedas and memory to Geeta.

Vedas appeared in front of Manu, listen to them, they are meant for listening. Even if you may forget them later onwards there is no

harm but Geeta is smriti, you should always remember it. This is that heavenly psalm for the humankind that will forever give you life, peace and everlasting prosperity.

The Lord said – Arjun! If you will not listen to my advice because of your ego you will cease to exist, that is the one who disrespects the advices of Geeta will become extinct. In the last psalm of episode fifteen the Lord said (15.20) **“Iti guhyatamam shastramidamuktam mayanaghal”** ‘I have uttered the most confidential of the confidential science’. By learning it you will acquire all the knowledge and ultimate credit.’ In the last two psalms of episode sixteen it is said, - **“Yah shastravidhimritsrija vartane kaamakaaratahl”** ‘The ones who shun these sciences by getting excited with the vices and pray other operations will not get happiness, prosperity and will neither reach abode.’

So Arjun, **“Tasmachchhastram pramanam te karyaakaryavyavasthitouhl”** this is the standard science behind management of your tasks and untasks. Study it well and act accordingly. You will be my part, reach that indestructible position and will attain life forever and everlasting peace and prosperity.

Geeta is the Manusmriti and as per Lord Shri Krishna Geeta is the religious science, there is no other science, no other memory. The various memories practiced in society today is the fallback of forgetting Geeta. The memories are the solution for machinations of the royalties and a weapon to build walls in the society. They neither paint a correct picture of Manu’s thoughts neither do they describe Manu’s times. Original Manusmriti Geeta accepts One Lord the Almighty the Truth, and proposes being one with it but currently available about 164 memories do not even talk about the God nor they discuss the ways to reach the Almighty. They limit themselves only to get reservation in the heaven and encourage those who are not there. They don’t even refer to Moksha.

The Geeta is for the pious hermit, for the householder, and FOR ALL MANKIND. Many a sage like Maharshi Patanjali has elucidated the mode, in isolation *from* questions of social order and organization, that begets the highest felicity. Yogeshwar Krishna also finds the way more salutary. Also, his message is for only deserving

pupils. He reminds Arjun time and again that he has imparted the knowledge to him because he is his loving devotee and because he (Krishn) wishes to do him good.

This knowledge is the most secret knowledge-secret because it is meant for only men of the required spiritual preparedness. So Arjun is at the end bidden that before he passes on this knowledge to another man he must wait, if the man is not a true devotee, until he is brought over to the ordained way. Observance of such a precaution in the imparting of this most mysterious knowledge is essential, *for* this knowledge is the one and only means of final salvation. And the Geeta is a systematic account, in Krishn's words, of this transcendental knowledge.

SACRED BOOKS are useful in the same way as monuments and places that remind us of the ideals and achievements of some departed sage. They tell us of the dynamic spiritual process which Yogeshwar Krishn calls the ordained action in order that we may know and be inclined to undertake it. In case we are overtaken by loss of remembrance sometimes, we go back to these works to refresh our memory. But these sacred books are of absolutely no avail if we just sprinkle grains of rice and sandal-paste on them and then relegate them to a high shelf. A noble work like the Geeta is a marker-a sign that directs us along the right path and provides support right up to the time when the destination is reached. We look up to holy books so that we may constantly advance towards the cherished goal. But after the heart has once seized it, the goal itself is transformed into a book. Veneration of noble memories is desirable, but a blind worship of them is deplorable.

As for the present exposition, it is called Yatharth Geeta because it is an attempt to elucidate the meaning of Krishn in its true perspective. Embodying the whole means of ultimate liberation, the Geeta is self-contained, There is not a single point in it that may engender any doubt. But since it cannot be grasped on an intellectual plane, there may arise what only appear to be doubts. So if we fail to comprehend any part of the Geeta, we can resolve our doubts as did Arjun by sitting devoutly by a sage who has perceived and realized the essence.

**OM SHANTI ! SHANTI !! SHANTI !!!**

# ***An Appeal***

This 'Yatharth Geeta' is intended to provide you with the noblest sermon made by Yogeshwar Sri Krishn in the 'SHREEMAD BHAGWAD GEETA: This contains the portrayal, by a sage, after attainment, of that Supreme Soul that abides within our hearts.

Attempting to use the Geeta with cynical perspectives is to be avoided, lest we may be cheated out of knowing our goals and the paths. By the devoted study of the Geeta, the entire human race stands to succeed in their efforts to gain well being. Even if they comprehend only a small portion of it, they are certain to attain the ultimate beatitude, because any progress made in this path, shall never be lost.

**- Swami Adgadanand**

## ***PREFACE OF EACH CHAPTER IN AUDIO CASSETTES***

1. The GEETA, a complete message in itself, of reverence and dedication to one Supreme Spirit, is an open invitation for sacredness to all. Whether rich or poor, of noble birth or unknown parentage, a virtuous person or a sinner, a woman or a man, chaste or extremely sinful, residing anywhere in the universe all are entitled to gain entry in it. The Geeta specifically stresses on the upliftment of these embroiled or caught up in the bondage of worldly affairs towards an ennobling and liberating spiritual path, whereas those who are virtuous are already engaged in the ordained action and meditation. That precious and universal teaching is presented herein.
2. Scriptures are created with two main objectives. One is to protect the social order and the culture, in which the people could follow the footsteps of their noble ancestors. The second is to ensure that people can gain ultimate, eternal peace.

Such scriptures as the Ramayan, the Bible, the Quran, and so on, deal with both these aspects. But, because of the material viewpoints held by most people, they tend to adhere only to those that are of immediate social use. In the spiritual texts, also, we find many references to useful social practices, confirming their relevance. Therefore, Sage Ved Vyas, while writing the Mahabharat, the epic within which the Geeta is an inherent part, had clearly referred to social as well as spiritual matters. However, in the Geeta itself, there is not a single verse that is concerned with the sustenance of physical life or the propagation of social or religious conventions, rites or customs. This was to ensure that people should not mix up dogmas into something, which is meant for universal and timeless well-being. This divine Geeta is presented exclusively in terms of timeless spiritual roots and concepts.



3. The Geeta was never intended for any specific individual, any specific caste, religion, path, place, time or for any conventional culture. It is a universal and eternal spiritual treatise. It is enduringly and most relevant to every nation, every religion, every living being. In fact, it is meant for everyone, everywhere. The Geeta is a scripture that is meant for the entire human race as a spiritual textbook.

Is it not a great honour and blessing for each of us then, that this Geeta can be our own personal, spiritual textbook?

4. The most venerable Bhagwan Mahavir, the founder of the Jain religion, as well as his contemporary Bhagwan Buddh, both of whom were completely God-realized, each in their separate teachings reflected the essential message of the Geeta to the people in folk languages.

“The Soul alone is the truth, and Self-realization may be attained with total restraining of the mind and senses’. This is the essential message conveyed by the Geeta.

When Lord Buddh stated that the same essence alone is universal and eternal, he reinforced this essential teaching of the Geeta.

Not only such a teaching from Lord Buddh, but whatever essence has been professed as universal teachings in the name of religion, or spirituality such as One Universal God, Prayer, Repentance, Penance and so on, are all teachings found to be contained within the Geeta itself, the original seed scripture of mankind. Here, then, in YATHARTH GEETA, these same lessons, coming straight from the spoken words of Swami Shree Adgadanand, are being presented to the world at large in the form of audio cassettes, so that the whole human race can benefit from this universal wisdom.

5. Among the folktales of India, there is a story that Aristotle—one of the great Greek philosopher and men of wisdom like Socrates had instructed Alexander the Great to bring back with him from India, a country that was well-known for its spiritual masters, a copy of the Shreemad Bhagwad GEETA as the

guru-like embodiment of the spiritual knowledge of the accomplished sages.

The essential concept of one single God as the Ultimate Reality taught in the GEETA, has been propagated in different languages at different times around the world by such “great masters as Moses, Jesus and numerous Sufi Saints also. Due to language and cultural differences, it can appear that the teachings of great masters are differentiated- but indeed, their essence is identical to the wisdom conveyed by Krishn to Arjun in the GEETA. As such the GEETA is indisputably a spiritual textbook for the entire human race.

By presenting the essence of YATHARTH GEETA, Swami Adgadanandji has made an invaluable contribution to all of mankind. The transformation of this text into the form of audio cassettes has been done by the courtesy of Sri Jitenbhai.

6. Every religion all over the world, can be seen as the distant echo of the Shreemad Bhagwad Geeta. By listening to the lessons conveyed by Swami Shree Adgadanandji in the ‘YATHARTH GEETA’, Sri Jitenbhai, who was born in the Jain religion, decided that those lessons must be made popular through audio cassettes. Such a decision came out of a realization that the essence of the GEETA’S teachings has found its place within the lessons throughout history taught by accomplished teachers such as Mahavir, Gautam Buddh, Nanak, Kabir and others. These cassettes of the Geeta are being presented for Self-realisation for seekers everywhere.

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7. At the time when the Geeta originated, thousands of years ago, mankind did not learn to identify itself through the separate, different religions, which evolved subsequently, but through such universally agreed upon sacred scripture and holy books as the Ved and the Upanishad in India. In those days, there was only one spiritual treatise that was acknowledged as containing the essence of all Upanishads, the SHREEMAD BHAGWAD GEETA, literally translated, the "Song of God". In this sense, the Geeta is an essential treatise- that is, one containing the essence- for gaining deliverance and prosperity.

When compared to reading scripture for learning, it is always more profitable to listen to it. Because of the clear pronunciation and intonation, listening to the spoken text lends itself to better concentration and comprehension. This is the essential purpose behind presenting the Yatharth Geeta, the Geeta in its True Perspective, through audio cassettes.

By listening to these audiocassettes, even our children can benefit by absorbing the noble culture of the Supreme Being. The atmosphere surrounding each of our own households shall reverberate with the spiritual echo of the "Bhagwad Geeta", the "Celestial Song", like a sacred grove.

8. That home where God is not being discussed is a cemetery. In today's world- even though they do have some inclination towards Self-realization in the Supreme Spirit, most people feel themselves unable to take time out to perform worship and meditation. In such a situation, if the message of the Geeta can reach out to every nook and corner of the world, it shall sow the seeds for universal well-being, peace, and prosperity. The divine words of God shall, through these cassettes, deliver the divine message of God contained in the "Bhagwad Geeta", which translates in English as the "Song of God" or the "Song Celestial". And this is the very essence of a worshipful foundation for the liberation and ultimate happiness of all beings.
9. We make sure that our children are well educated so that they shall be inculcated with noble culture. People tend to believe that noble culture is that which shall ensure a decent livelihood and solve the problems of daily living. Very few, hardly anyone,

has their attention turned towards God. Many people even have sufficient material wealth that they perceive no need at all for calling upon God (as the noble Arjun did in the Geeta to his friend and charioteer, the accomplished sage Krishn). In the end, though, all material wealth and seeming security is perishable. At the time of death, even though they were attached to those things, people still have to leave them behind. Given this undisputed reality, the only path open to any of us is to understand during our lifetime, while we are still in our body, the ways to move towards the Supreme Being. This is the essential purpose that is being transmitted through these audio cassettes of Yatharth Geeta.

10. Whatever religions and religious sects exist in this world, were all formed in the name of some enlightened soul by some group of dedicated followers. The secluded spots that the noble sage had chosen for his meditation in the later years, have now become pilgrimage centres, ashrams, monasteries, temples and churches, where in the name of those sages and for earning their living, people engage themselves in various practices, ranging from simple livelihood to extreme luxury. Accomplished sages are always put on pedestal, but no one can attain the stage of accomplishment simply by putting themselves on a pedestal or being put there by devotees. That is the reason, that dharm has always been the field of an authentically realised sage, a true, accomplished teacher.

The GEETA, the “Song Celestial” in Sir Edwin Arnold’s translation, is undoubtedly a scripture. It is the actual teaching of the Supreme Spirit as manifested through the personage of Yogeshwar Lord Sri Krishn, a realized sage and accomplished teacher. These eternal truths and the true essence of the same sacred verses of the timeless dialogue between the accomplished teacher, Krishn, and the devoted and noble-hearted spiritual seeker, Arjun, are being relayed to you in their pure form and innate clarity through these audio cassettes of **Yatharth Geeta**.

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